

*Quarterly*  
**NEWS**  
*Letter*

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WILL RANSOM AND THE RANSOM RECORDS  
IN THE NEWBERRY LIBRARY


By James M. Wells

AN IDEAL PRESS (1939)

By Porter Garnett

SERENDIPITY  
NOTES ON PUBLICATIONS :: EXHIBITIONS  
ELECTED TO MEMBERSHIP  
&c. &c.

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*Published for its members by The Book Club  
of California, 545 Sutter Street,  
San Francisco*

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# The Book Club of California

FOUNDED in 1912, The Book Club of California is a non-profit association of book-lovers and collectors who have a special interest in Pacific Coast history, literature, and fine printing. Its chief aims are to further the interests of book collectors in the West and to promote an understanding and appreciation of fine books.

The Club is limited to seven hundred and fifty members. When vacancies exist membership is open to all who are in sympathy with its aims and whose applications are approved by the Board of Directors. Regular Membership involves no responsibilities beyond payment of the annual dues of \$15.00.\* Dues date from the month of the member's election.

Members receive the *Quarterly News-Letter* and all parts of the current Keepsake series, *Early California Resorts*. They have the privilege, but not the obligation, of buying the Club publications which are limited, as a rule, to one copy per member.

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\*Excerpt from by-laws of the Club: "...of the total of \$15.00 annual dues...the amount of \$2.00 shall be in consideration for the *Quarterly News-Letter*...and the additional amount of \$3.00 shall be in consideration for the annual keepsakes..." Extra copies of keepsakes or *News-Letters*, when available, are sold to members at 50c each. Membership dues and contributions (including books or documents at current market value, suitable for the Club's library) are deductible in computing income taxes.

# Quarterly NEWS Letter

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Will Ransom and the Ransom Records

in the Newberry Library

by *James M. Wells* \*

IT IS appropriate that Will Ransom should have bequeathed his records of private presses, together with a large collection of documentation, to the Wing Foundation of the Newberry Library, for Chicago played a great part in Ransom's life and career. When, a young man hit by the germ of the arts and crafts movement, he decided to become an artist and printer (modelling himself on his twin idols, William Morris and Elbert Hubbard), it was to the newly established School of the Art Institute of Chicago that he came, in 1903, mainly as a result of an earlier meeting with Irving Way, Loop bookseller and publisher. Way had praised the school highly and had also promised an introduction to a young printer friend, Fred Goudy, who taught

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\*Custodian of the John M. Wing Foundation at the Newberry Library.



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at Frank Holme's correspondence school and whose ability and taste seemed highly promising. Way thought that Ransom would hit it off well with Goudy and his circle.

After a year at the school, Ransom decided to quit. He was doing well—he won two awards that year—but he felt he was not learning fast enough. Goudy was tired of teaching and wanted to set up a printing shop of his own with a private press as part of the establishment. The only hitch was the usual one: money. Friends and relatives had been approached, outside backers sought, but without success. Ransom, in a characteristic gesture of faith and generosity, borrowed \$250 against his life insurance and the Village Press came into existence. The money was needed to pay American Type Foundry for casting a proprietary type face—it had been commissioned by Kuppenheimer, but turned down—so that the new press could hold up its head among its peers. Ransom became Goudy's assistant in the shop.

The Goudys soon moved east and Ransom decided reluctantly to give up art for the security of a bookkeeper's job. There followed nine unhappy years of safety until, in 1912, his bride of a year persuaded him to gamble on his talent and vocation and return to art. He did the usual run of jobs: free-lance lettering and illustration (a type called Parson after the advertising manager of Carson's, his best customer, had a considerable success; it was generally used for the subtitles in films); advertising pieces; books for publishers and book clubs. In 1921 he set up his own press, whose output consisted mostly of small books of verse subsidized by their authors. It took only four years to exhaust his capital and force a return to commercial typography.

All through these years he looked at books, bought books, saved books. He was a born collector, lacking only one prime requisite—money. He was also that far rarer bird, a born bibliographer, accurate, neat, logical in mind. As a boy he had kept elaborate records, had printed books and written out manuscripts, and had begun to save all sorts of printed pieces. All his life he managed to buy a few of the books he admired and to acquire a vast variety of printed matter which struck his fancy: prospectuses, brochures, Christmas cards, labels, time-tables—anything which seemed interestingly or well printed or designed might be put away in some box or drawer, mounted and labelled. If Ransom

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had pack rat tendencies, as his daughter accused him, at least they were the tendencies of a tidy and fastidious pack rat.

In 1927 came the first fruits of this activity—a series of articles on private presses for *Publisher's Weekly* which led to a commission to prepare a monograph and bibliography of the subject. The next two years were devoted to the task, the book being published, fittingly, in the year which marked the end of an era for a great many things, among them the issuance of expensive books in limited editions. *Private Presses and their Books* has remained a standard bibliography and reference tool ever since its publication; its worth can be assessed by the frequency with which it appears in the desiderata lists of out-of-print specialists.

Ransom had a hard time during the next decade. First came the loss of his job and the necessity of beginning the free-lance struggle again. Money was scarce; there was little left to buy books, scarcely enough to keep up the enormous correspondence which the *Private Presses* had occasioned, and to keep up the Records. He left Chicago in 1930 and moved to Rochester, New York, where he became director of a newly established book department in the Printing House of Leo Hart. Here he was responsible not only for the general run of commercial printing but for a number of limited editions of the kind he wanted to print, among them books illustrated by Kent and Dwiggins. A commission from the Limited Editions Club led to a friendship with George Macy, for whom he later worked briefly. At the Hart establishment he had his first real chance at producing fine books with modern machinery rather than the handpresses he had relied upon. He discovered that the composing machine and the power press, when mastered and used intelligently and creatively, could give excellent results.

Five years in Rochester, an interlude in Buffalo, a series of jobs which had little to do with books and where he had to rely on the mails for bookish conversation. He exchanged letters with a prodigious number of people: Goudy, Dwiggins, other old friends; Rogers, Rollins, the established typographic greats; young artists and printers in search of encouragement or advice; collectors, booksellers, publishers, bibliographers asking for information or help. His letters reveal a man with uncommon tact, generosity, and sympathy, always able to find something warm and helpful



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to say, yet with shrewd common sense and—in letters to those he knew well—wit, humor, and a seasoning of vinegar. The letters also reveal all too well the personal struggles—for time, for money, for the maintenance of standards in a world where they grew noticeably relaxed. Toward the end of this period, in 1937, he began the series of monthly articles for *Bookbinding and Book-Production* which ran until 1945. In these pieces one finds expressed most completely his philosophy of book design and manufacture.

Things looked up a bit in 1939. The 500th anniversary of the invention of printing was to be observed the next year and a committee was organized by the American Institute of Graphic Arts to ensure fitting commemoration of the event in America. Melbert Cary, Jr., proprietor of the Press of the Woolly Whale, was president of the AIGA and a close friend and admirer of Ransom; he put him up for secretary to the committee, which post he secured. The appointment brought with it a year in New York, a brief but exciting stay, as well as new and highly stimulating friends and colleagues.

Soon after, in 1941, came the last move and the beginning of Will Ransom's happiest and most productive period. He was appointed art editor of the University of Oklahoma Press at Norman, with the rank of associate professor in the University. He enjoyed life in a college town, he liked his colleagues at the press and among the faculty, he found the design and production of several hundred university press books—with their great variety and tight budgets—a challenge to his ingenuity and to his principles. He even found time to publish a series of *Selective Check Lists of Press Books* extending the range of his book and bringing in many of the newer presses and printers with whom he had corresponded and whose work he found promising.

With Will Ransom's death, in May 1955, the Ransom Records were transferred to the Newberry, as he had planned during his life; they were further supplemented and augmented by gifts from his daughter, Mrs. Edward Rogg, and from friends and associates. When they arrived at the Newberry later that year it took some time to sort through them, weeding out duplicates and unrelated material, and to establish a scheme for their use and disposition—a labor tentatively, but not finally, finished. The

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material consisted of about thirty large cartons: 151 loose-leaf binders—each devoted to one or more private presses—containing historical and bibliographical data on the presses and their personnel, together with separate descriptions (of varying completeness) on each of their books. There are also forty-six large filing boxes filled with prospectuses, descriptions, ephemera of all sorts, and the correspondence with artists, printers, and designers which provided the raw material for the work. The Records cover better than fifty years; they contain thousands of letters from some of the best known and most highly respected printers of the period, as well as from amateurs, semi-professionals, collectors, bookmen—the kind of information which so often a specialist wishes he might find but cannot. Ransom conceived of his task as being the most complete possible documentation of the private press movement. In addition, he loved printers and lovers of fine printing, enjoyed their company, if only through the post, and had the energy to keep up a vast correspondence. Most of the letters are from Americans, although the English are well represented (and the war years show a steady stream of thanks for food parcels, books, small comforts). Most of the writers soon become friends, revealing themselves, their hopes and aspirations, as well as their work in their letters. The collector and historian of the press books of the first half of the Twentieth Century will frequently find the Ransom Records of use; he will enjoy, in the process, the picture they give of a warm, a generous, and a devoted human being.



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## An Ideal Press (1939)

by Porter Garnett\*

THIS PROPOSAL contemplates the possible establishment in the United States (the particular locality is of comparatively slight importance) of a press or small printing house devoted solely to producing—in forms of dignity and beauty and by the employment of materials and methods that will insure high relative permanence—works in philosophy, archaeology, history, and belles-lettres that signalize the most enduring interests of man and society.

### PREAMBLE

When, last year, Mr. St. John Hornby put into effect a decision, made some time ago, to bring to an end the work of his Ashendene Press in London, the high tradition of English printing that began in the Eighteen-Nineties may be said to have reached its term. It is perhaps inexact to call a movement of such recent origin a tradition, but, although, strictly speaking, it was a revival, it was also a beneficent protraction into our own time of the great heritage that extends, through a long and noble line of printers, back to the beginnings of the art in the Fifteenth Century, and to the even nobler calligraphic sources of the Middle Ages.

Printing has been done in our own time—both under the inspiration of William Morris and wholly independent of it—and will continue to be done, with high competence and not infrequently with beauty and distinction; but it should be pointed out and emphasized that, in all but a few isolated instances, it has represented a different approach and purposed different ends

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\*The late Porter Garnett (1871-1952) and his work were well known to members of The Book Club of California. A specialist in the technique of handpress printing, which he taught at the Carnegie Institute of Technology and elsewhere, he was awarded the Gold Medal of the American Institute of Graphic Arts in 1932, "in recognition of the inspiration he has given young men entering the craft of printing." Among his publications were *The Ideal Book* (1931) and *A Conspectus of Type Design from 1454 to the Present Day* (1935). This proposal for founding an ideal press is here published for the first time.



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from those that motivated the activities of Morris, Cobden-Sanderson, and Hornby. Employing handicraft methods and unconcerned with either quantity or speed, they kept their craft pure and uncontaminated; through a common ethos they served humanity by means that were nonutilitarian but which purposed and achieved an aesthetic and a spiritual end.

It is true that these presses—the Kelmscott, the Doves, and the Ashendene—were commercial to the extent that the books they produced were offered for sale, but revenue was for their founders a secondary and minor consideration and, to their credit be it said, they consistently and resolutely refused to make concessions to public taste, repudiated expediency and opportunism, and ignored both the prejudices of the average man and the vagaries of fashion. Their purpose and their function was to lead rather than to follow, and if, in the exercise of a sensitive and informed taste, they leaned upon tradition, it was with the wisdom which teaches that in order to build for the future it is necessary not only to recognize but to comprehend antecedent cultures, to relive emotionally the impulsions to which they gave rise, and to reshape and revitalize them in terms of one's own personality. This, some will say, takes courage. Perhaps; but it would be nearer the truth to say that it calls for faith, sincerity, zeal, and—under the existing order which makes man the slave of economic urgencies—opportunity.

These observations apply to English printing and, more specifically, to the three presses that have been mentioned, because other practitioners of the pure technique of handpress printing, both in England and on the Continent, have either not essayed or have failed to achieve the intrinsic monumentality and splendor of their productions. It must further be observed that (if we except the Elston Press, of New Rochelle [1900-1904], frankly imitative of the Kelmscott) no press of like character has ever existed in the United States. Such sporadic essays in handpress printing as have been made in this country since machine methods usurped the field, while in some instances aesthetic in purpose and estimable in design and execution, have partaken more of the publishing venture addressed to contemporary collectors than they have offered a parallel of those expository symbols of faith and creative exuberance produced at Hammersmith and Chelsea and

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bequeathed by their makers to posterity. Because our forebears were of necessity preoccupied with production for the sake of production, rather than with production for the sake of the thing produced, it is not surprising that the American consciousness should today be magnetized and dominated by an ideology of utility and gain. As Mr. Wallace says in *New Frontiers*: "In the old days we could not trust ourselves with joy and beauty because they ran counter to our competitive search for wealth and power." That, alas, is true. It is also true that, at times, we have been given to sticking macaroni in our hat and calling them feathers.

This proposal, then, is predicated upon the desirability of establishing in this country such a press as has here been imaged, to serve as an agency of intellectual and artistic advancement, American in origin and in personnel. It offers in concrete terms a plan whereby such a press may be founded through the allotment or gift—from an individual, a group, a society, or an institution—of a sum of money moderate in comparison with many of the donations and bequests by which various institutions have been created.

It is, however, a subsidiary provision, subordinate to and dependent upon the major plan, that must first be presented, because it represents a broadening of the initial purpose and prefigures possible developments in the future that, in their humane potentialities, may well outweigh the more immediate considerations.

The provision in question is that, in addition to its work of producing books such as have been described, the press should undertake to train apprentices in the special technique of hand-press printing. It would seem desirable that there should be no more than two apprentices at any one time, for, to serve the best interests of the art to which it is dedicated, the press should not be in any sense a school.

By this means there might be effected an organization that would not only uphold high standards but which might, through a promotional succession of apprentices, assistants, and masters, who had received their training at the press itself, be self-perpetuating in terms of those standards.

What is here proposed, therefore, is a foundation that would



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have as one of its chief objectives (at least potentially attainable by the method here posited) the continuation, preservation, and, possibly, the perpetuation of a form of handicraft which, owing to the inroads made by the machine and to the progressive industrialization and dehumanization of society, is threatened with extinction—with becoming a lost art.

The reflection obtrudes itself that, although William Morris and Cobden-Sanderson inspired many printers to emulation (also, alas, to imitation) it was expressed in an acceptance of their principles rather than through the adoption of their methods and technique. May it not be regarded therefore as regrettable that the men who set the type and pulled the presses at the Kelmscott and the Doves should have been “helpers” rather than actual disciples *in domo*? A similar policy was pursued at the Ashendene Press, although to a less extent, for, admirably and blessedly, Mr. Hornby at one time did much of the work with his own hands. Had these pioneers of the “Revival” but made it a part of their purpose to foster the intramural disciple, commentators, in reviewing today the achievements of their period, might not be able, as they now are, to set these three uncompromising exponents of handpress printing apart for their highest praise. In view of this universal recognition of their preeminence, it may be asked if it was not the “purity” of the process by which their books were fashioned—a purity that no mechanistic propaganda or obscurantism can devalue—as much as their content and their design, that gives to the Kelmscott *Chaucer*, the Doves *Bible*, and the Ashendene *Dante* their unquestioned and uncontested supremacy. These three magnificent books, and others produced by the same presses will adorn and glorify in future ages the period that gave them birth. It has been said that it is those artifacts which are not unique—the multiplied tablet, manuscript, engraving, or book—that constitute the most enduring monuments. Unlike works in architecture or sculpture, they exist in dispersed but artistically equivalent units, and are therefore less liable to possible obliteration than, in its singularity, is the noblest building or the finest statue. In the strictest etymological sense of the word (which is at the same time its spiritual sense), they *record*; that is to say, they *speak again to the heart* of man.

Physical durability is one thing; spiritual diuturnity, another.

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The first may be conferred upon the fine book by means of the lasting nature of the materials—vellum, handmade paper, fine inks—from which it is fashioned; the second, by virtue of those humane qualities, the importance and authority of its content, and the beauty of form which ever resides in rightness of design and in the felicitous expression of a sensitive personal taste. It is, as we know, this tripartite excellence—significant communication, good design, and honest substance—that today commands the admiring interest of archaeologists, critics, and devout amateurs in such *disjecta membra* of the past as the Lindesfarn *Gospels*, the Gutenberg *Bible*, the Aldine *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, and the *Horae* of Verard, of Pigouchet, and of Tory. Must it not therefore be through the same trinity of virtues that the approbation of the archaeologists, critics, and amateurs of the future shall be merited and, haply, won? Should not an effort be made to save the high tradition of unmechanized printing from almost certain extinction? It may be that the great books of the Kelmscott, the Doves, and the Ashendene Presses will never again be matched. It is certain that they will not be unless someone has the desire to match them and, with the desire, the sustaining aid of courage, faith, sincerity, zeal, and—opportunity.

### THE PLAN PROPER

I. EQUIPMENT—The equipment adequate to the needs of a press such as is here visioned is not only simple but should be kept so. That is to say, any increase of equipment beyond what is essential for efficient and comfortable operation—any expansion—should be discountenanced because it would alter, if it did not actually destroy the basic character of the press as a workshop. The actual requirements would consist of two hand-presses, a proving press, a standing press (for wetting paper), an imposing stone, chases, galleys, some other necessary implements and accessories, tpestands and cases, and type. The minimum amount of type may be put at 1,500 pounds. The only physical expansion that might be warranted would be an increase in this minimum amount of type. Such an increase would facilitate operation and permit a wider range of sizes and designs. It may be pointed out in this connection that the Kelmscott Press



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used only three founts of type; the Doves Press, only one; and the Ashendene Press (except in its early, tentative books), two. In order that the individuality and nonimitative character of the press may be maintained, it is desirable that it should have type or types especially designed for its use; that is to say, it should have a "private" fount or founts. Two types of original and distinguished design should fill every possible requirement. An italic fount (designed expressly for the press) might be desirable, though not essential. The range of sizes, except for a few "titling" and initial letters, need not exceed two or, at most, three.

2. HOUSING—For all practical purposes the press (in its character as a workshop) might be satisfactorily housed in any well-lighted room, with a high ceiling and having a floor space of not less than 800 square feet. The compression and torsion strength of the floor should have a margin of safety above the weight of presses, type, and so forth that it would have to bear. The room should be provided with electric light and running water. An adjoining room, to be used as an office, workroom, and library, should have a floor space of not less than 150 square feet. It may be pertinent to state that the operations of printing when the handpress is used are entirely noiseless.

3. PERSONNEL—The conduct of the press should be in the hands of a Director or Master, who would have a First and a Second Assistant. The qualifications of the Director and the Assistants may be broadly defined by quoting an observation made by Mr. Daniel Berkeley Updike in the Conclusion of his *Printing Types: Their History, Forms, and Use*: "Typography," he says, "was good then [in early days], and has been so, under varying circumstances, and at different periods, whenever it was practised patiently by *educated men of trained taste*." More specifically, the Director should be (as well as and as much as his assistants) a practising craftsman in the best sense of the term. He should possess an ability in typographic design and a proficiency in the special technique of handpress printing that would justify his selection for the post of Director and warrant his assumption of the responsibilities implicit in the purposes and standards of the press, as they have been designated. He should have skill in formal calligraphy and letter-drawing, and in such stylized design as may be fittingly

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associated with typography. Although proficiency in type-composition and press-working should be the principal qualification of the two assistants, it would be desirable that their capabilities should more or less parallel those of the Director.

Since the intelligent and the wise never cease to be learners, the work of the press should serve, for the Director and the assistants, as a medium for the enhancement of their skill. The assistants, therefore, might be regarded (and, haply, might regard themselves) as advanced apprentices, and should be thought of, in keeping with the programme of continuation outlined in a previous paragraph, as moving respectively, when the incumbency of a director ends, into the positions of Director and First Assistant.

An increase of the personnel through the acceptance by the press of two junior apprentices may be allowed to remain as a tentative proposal. Suffice it to say that should such a plan be put into effect as a constructive factor of the continuation programme, junior apprentices should be selected on the basis of their intellectual qualification, aptitude, and seriousness of purpose. An hypothesis that suggests itself is that their acceptance might be based upon credentials (possibly scholarships) from universities or colleges. An apprenticeship at a press of the type herein proposed would have many of the characteristics of a post-graduate course.

4. ADMINISTRATION—The general management of the press should be in the hands of the Director, under such control and limitations as a developed plan of organization might impose. Receipts and disbursements should be cared for by an Auditor designated to discharge these functions under the provisions of such a developed plan.

5. EDITORIAL CONTROL—The selection of texts to be printed and published should be in the hands of an Editorial Board, consisting of not less than three persons, of whom the Director should be one.

6. PUBLICATION PROGRAMME—The productivity of the press would be variable because conditioned by the character of the books undertaken, which might range from a 100-page octavo to a 400-page folio, and from books devoid of decoration to richly embellished volumes. With such a range in mind it may be assumed that the press would produce from two to four books a



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year. It must be realized that, under present-day conditions, any attempt to produce large editions on the handpress must inevitably set in operation the law of diminishing returns. For this reason, and because of the physical character of the books it would produce, the publications of the press should be limited to editions of 400 copies or less.

7. REVENUES—Since the proposed press would have as its major purpose the attainment of excellence in forms of artistic, educational, and humane value, it should be an endowed institution, and should be maintained, like other institutions purposing similar ends, on a nonprofit basis. The books it produces should therefore be offered for sale at prices representing the actual cost of production. The revenue thus produced, while not designed to meet the costs of maintenance, would nevertheless offset them to no small extent and, under favorable conditions, perhaps completely.

8. DISTRIBUTION—By issuing, to important libraries, institutions, and collectors, a Prospectus, setting forth, with dignity and beauty, the purposes and policies of the press, and giving a list of projected publications, subscriptions for periods of from one to several years might be obtained in sufficient number to underwrite an appreciable, possibly a large, part of the editions. Some of these subscriptions, it may be assumed, would be in the nature of grants-in-aid. The books of the press could also be distributed by direct sale. The advisability of appoint-agents in major cities, in the United States and abroad, would have to be carefully weighed. The Prospectus would be the first production of the press.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *The Prospectus was never issued. The Editorial Board is grateful to a friend and former student of Porter Garnett for preservation of "An Ideal Press" and to Mr. Gilbert Foote for permission to publish it here.*

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## *Notes on Publications*

BY THE TIME this issue of the Quarterly reaches you your copy of the Club's Fall publication will be in your hands. We must apologize for the delay, but not too regretfully, for by making certain changes and additions the book has been greatly enhanced in both beauty and interest. *The Garden of Health*, we feel, will be regarded in the future as one of the Club's most attractive productions. Needless to say it was completely sold out on publication.

The Club's Christmas publication is *The Drawings of John Woodhouse Audubon Illustrating his Adventures through Mexico and California in 1849-50*. This will be a beautiful volume containing no less than 34 drawings (two in full color) originally made by the son of the famous ornithologist on his expedition to the Gold Fields. There will be descriptive text from Audubon's own journal as well as his explanation of the illustrations. The book has been edited by Carl S. Dentzel, Director of the Southwest Museum.

*The Drawings of John Woodhouse Audubon* is a highly important volume. Only five of the drawings have been hitherto reproduced. These were in his *Journal*, published in 1906, and long since out of print and scarce.

*The Drawings of John Woodhouse Audubon* is being designed and printed at the Grabhorn Press, the text in two colors throughout. It will be a folio volume, the same size as the original drawings, approximately 13 1/4 x 10 inches. The edition is limited to 400 copies at a pre-publication price of \$23.50, after publication \$25.00.

An announcement will be sent to you in due course. Please order promptly to avoid disappointment.

## *Exhibition Notes*

THE BOOK CLUB has had the pleasure of celebrating the silver anniversary of the Ward Ritchie Press with an exhibition in the Club rooms from October 4 through December 6. For a quarter century now Ward Ritchie has occupied a position of prominence as one of California's outstanding fine printers. Among the pieces loaned to us by the Ritchies was Ward's first shop sign showing his now-famous anchor and skull device. The material shown ranged from the fugitive early books and ephemeral pieces, which Ward produced both in Paris and in this country, to his contemporary prize-winning books. The exhibition was formally opened with a reception for Ward and Marka Ritchie on October 7.

In December and January the Club will celebrate the publication of volume one of Carl Wheat's epic *Mapping the Transmississippi West, 1540-1861*. The first volume of this monumental work has just been completed by the Grabhorn Press. The publisher is The Institute of Historical Cartography and all subscribers to the book will be invited to become Fellows of the Institute. The notes, manuscript, trials, proofs, and some of the original maps which figure in the production of this book will be shown in the cases. The exhibition will be



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opened with a reception honoring Mr. and Mrs. Wheat in the Club rooms on Tuesday, December 10, at five o'clock. Some trial pages from the Club's Christmas book, *The Drawings of John Woodhouse Audubon Illustrating His Adventures Through Mexico and California in 1849-1850*, will also be shown.

### *Elected to Membership*

*The following have been elected to membership since the Fall issue of the News-Letter:*

<i>Member</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Sponsor</i>
Stanley S. Aldrich	New York, N. Y.	Wm. Maxwell Wood
Robert Bennett	Los Angeles	Michael Harrison
Edwin H. Carpenter, Jr.	San Francisco	George L. Harding
Frank de Bellis	San Francisco	Mrs. Michael Ford-Aquino
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Sharp Whitmore	Los Angeles	W. W. Robinson
George H. Whitney	Los Angeles	W. W. Robinson
Huntington Williams	Baltimore, Maryland	Ellen Shaffer
Bodleian Library	Oxford, England	James D. Hart

### *Serendipity*

THE BODLEIAN LIBRARY at Oxford is gaining support through a group known as Bodley's American Friends. This group is closely associated with Friends of the Bodleian in supplying the library with much-needed additional funds for the purchase both of rare books and manuscripts and also of expensive American books which the library cannot otherwise afford. All Friends are welcome at the library when visiting Oxford; they receive the *Bodleian Library Record* as issued and a special invitation to the annual general meeting which takes place in Oxford in June. Bodley's American Friends is divided into three groups: A minimum subscription of \$5.00 annually makes the donor an American Friend. Bodley's own phrase, "Honourable Friend," is used for those contributing

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annually \$25.00 or more. Gifts of \$1,000 in cash or kind entitle the donor to become an American Life Friend.

Checks for contributions should be made payable to *American Trust Fund for Oxford University* and should be sent to Henry Allen Moe, 551 Fifth Avenue, New York 17, New York. Such contributions are tax deductible.



HAVING OPENED NOVEMBER 1 at the Huntington Library, an extensive exhibition of the works of William Blake commemorates the 200th anniversary of his birth. It includes original drawings, as well as most of the printed work of England's great poet and artist. In conjunction with the exhibit, the library is issuing a revised edition of the William Blake catalogue first published in 1938 and long out of print. The *Catalogue of William Blake's Drawings and Paintings in the Huntington Library* by C. H. Collins Baker has been enlarged and revised by R. R. Wark. (\$3.00.)



PARIS HAS BEEN the scene for impromptu meetings of members of The Book Club, including our retired editor, Lewis Allen, and his wife, with our former president, Mrs. John I. Walter. The latter has been studying binding again, as she did several years ago, as well as cooking at the famous Cordon Bleu School. The Allens are on an extensive European trip and have been joined by Herbert and Peter Fahey and the Victor Hammers of the Anvil Press, Lexington, Kentucky. The Allens are currently looking for a handpress and have plans to print a volume or two.



*From Strawberry Hill to Gravesend: Two Centuries of Private Press Printing (1757-1957)* is the current exhibit arranged at the Chapin Library, Williams College, in Williamstown, Massachusetts, by H. Richard Archer, New England correspondent for this *Quarterly* and Custodian of the Chapin Library. The exhibit traces the development of private press publishing from the time of Sir Horace Walpole to that of the Grabhorns, with volumes from the Chapin collections and items borrowed from a local collector. Mr. Archer's own Hippogryph Press by the way, is in process of being reassembled and will soon be in production again.



IN CELEBRATION of the 500th anniversary of the founding of Freiburg University, a unique document of medieval student life, namely *Statuta Collegii Sapientiae*, has been published in a facsimile edition by Jan Thorbecke Verlag Lindau & Konstanz. The statutes, dated 1497, describe in great detail the student life

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of the period by stating the rules of conduct for the students and their course of study, endowment, and financial management, and administration of the library. In all, there are eighty-eight chapters which are illustrated by eighty miniatures, the work of a skillfull artist of the Augsburg school of popular manuscript illumination. The work is published in two volumes, with an English introduction and a transcript of the Latin text; price \$12.50. A copy of the prospectus can be obtained from publisher, P. O. Box 1654, Grand Central Station, New York 17, New York.



ALSO PUBLISHED by the Huntington Library is *American Fiction, 1851-1875* by Lyle H. Wright, which introduces for the first time a comprehensive guide to the fiction of this significant quarter century. Information about the locale, date of the story, or subject matter, noted under many of the entries, will be particularly useful to those making regional or subject studies of American fiction, and also serve as a guide for the social historian. (\$7.50.)



THE SUBJECT of the current exhibit in the Club's quarters, the Ward Ritchie Press, is publishing this Fall three books of interest to Western collectors. The first, *Books West Southwest*, is a collection of essays on writers, their books, and their land, by Lawrence Clark Powell, head of the UCLA libraries and no newcomer to *Quarterly* readers. It will sell for \$4.50 which is the same price for the second book entitled, *Men of El Tejon*. This book by Earle Crowe is the story of the vast Tejon Ranch north of Los Angeles in the Tehachapis. The third book, *Cattle on the Conejo*, by J. H. Russell, is described as an authentic story of the later American days of cattle raising in Southern California, established in the area between Los Angeles and Ventura. (\$3.00.)



JUST PUBLISHED by the Champoege Press in Portland, Oregon, is *Jesuit Mission Presses in the Pacific Northwest*, a history and bibliography of the imprints of the St. Ignatius and Sacred Heart Presses between 1876 and 1899. Written by Wilfred P. Schoenberg, S. J., the volume is illustrated by photographs and reproductions of title pages and broadsides, and each copy contains an original example printed at one of the two presses. 804 copies have been printed by Lawton Kennedy. (\$7.50.) Also available by the time this *News-Letter* appears will be another book printed by Lawton Kennedy—*Juan Antonio Balthasar*, two original reports written in 1744-1745 by this Padre Visitador to the Sonora frontier. Translated and edited by the late Peter Masten Dunne, S. J., the Balthasar reports are said to illuminate ecclesiastical friction with civil authority



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and Jesuit thinking on the mission frontier in the mid-eighteenth century. The book is being printed in three colors and will have a gold-stamped, decorated cover and two facsimile maps. Published by the Arizona Pioneers' Historical Society. (\$10.00.) Both these books will be available through your local bookseller.



OCCIDENTAL COLLEGE is honoring Ward Ritchie's twenty-fifth anniversary as a printer with an extensive exhibition of his work at the Occidental College Library. We understand that this is not the same exhibit currently being held in the Club's quarters.



AN INTERESTING little booklet, *Public Relations Editionary*, has arrived from P. K. Thomajan. The "clusters of sweet-sour grapes pressed from the fruits of experience" are great fun as is the preface from which we quote—"Public relations is a mettlesome profession, one demanding rare prescience of mind with a bravura flair for meeting exigencies with deft expediency." The booklet is available from Mr. Thomajan at Carlstadt, New Jersey, for one dollar.



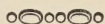
FROM THE PRESS of Victor Hammer comes a book published by the Caxton Club of Chicago. The book, *Faust: A Puppet Play*, tells of the common-sense aspects and the humor of the original folk story on which Goethe based his masterpiece. The illustrations consist of wood-cuts made by Fritz Kredel for a German version published in 1950 by the Bauer Type Foundry. Copies of the English version are available for \$12.50 from the Chiswick Bookshop, 113 East 55th Street, New York 22, New York.



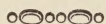
THE GRABHORN PRESS has announced publication of *The Peyote Ritual: Visions and Descriptions of Monroe Tsa Toke*. Tsa Toke, a gifted Kiowa-Indian artist, recorded his visions and his explanation of their meaning to him as an ardent Peyote adherent. Fifteen paintings or "visions," reproduced in full color, are included in this folio volume, the foreword to which is by A. L. Kroeber. In addition to the foreword, Mrs. Leslie Van Ness Denman has contributed an Introduction and Susan Peters, Field Matron of the Kiowa Agency, some reminiscences of Monroe Tsa Toke. The reproductions are printed on heavy English hand-made paper and the text on all-rag American paper. The

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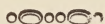
type is hand-set Goudy New Style and the volume is bound with a linen back and decorated paper sides. 250 copies of the edition of 325 are for sale. (\$32.00.)



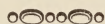
TO BE PUBLISHED soon by David Magee, San Francisco, and Francis Edwards, Ltd., London, is *Captain Cook in Hawaii*, a narrative by David Samwell, with an introduction by Sir Maurice Holmes. Considered the most interesting and accurate version of Cook's death, Samwell's account will be printed by Lawton Kennedy as a small quarto of some 75 pages with five illustrations, two of which have never before been published. Of the edition of 750 copies, 400 are reserved for sale in the United States and Hawaii. (\$7.50.)



A BOOK of uncommon interest has just been published by The Grolier Club, 47 East 60th Street, New York 22, New York. *Authors at Work* is the complete catalogue of an exhibition of that title presented at The Grolier Club in 1955 and includes an address delivered by Robert H. Taylor at the opening of the exhibition. The book is liberally illustrated with forty-eight full-page reproductions in collotype of famous manuscripts selected to show revisions made by the writers. 750 copies. (\$10.00.)



THE CLUB has received a number of copies of a booklet entitled, *The Merle Armitage Books in the William Andrews Clark Memorial Library*. The booklet contains an address by Merle Armitage entitled "The Ubiquitous Book in Our Time." Members may secure a copy, free, as long as the supply lasts, in the Club rooms.



HAROLD HOLMES, veteran Bay Area bookseller, will recount bookselling experiences at the California Historical Society, 2090 Jackson Street, San Francisco, at 8 p.m. on Wednesday, December 4. Members of The Book Club of California are invited to attend.



THE LATEST ORGANIZATION formed in the Bay Area devoted to an interest in fine printing is located in the mid-peninsula area and is known as *The Moxon Chappel*. Monthly meetings are held at the presses of the members, keepsakes are produced, good fellowship is in abundance, and wives are expected to take an active part in all affairs of the Chappel. There is hope of establishing other Chappels in other parts of the Bay Area.



## The Book Club of California

GLEN DAWSON of the Dawson Book Shop in Los Angeles is publishing a work entitled *The Malibu*. The historical section has been written by Board member W. W. Robinson, and the personal side by Lawrence Clark Powell. The work will contain thirty illustrations and a map in color by Irene Robinson and will be issued in a limited edition, hand signed and numbered. The printer is the Plantin Press of Los Angeles. (\$20.00.)

Several new volumes have appeared in Glen Dawson's "Early California Travel Series." These include:

*The Diary of Titian R. Peale* with an introduction by Carl R. Dentzel, Director of the Southwest Museum. It was printed by Richard Hoffman at the Los Angeles City College Press.

*The Remarkable Adventures of Daniel D. Heustis* with an introduction by Carey S. Bliss. The Plantin Press set the type and the volume was printed by William Cheney.

*The Diary of Ensign Gabriel Moraga's Expedition of Discovery in the Sacramento Valley, 1808*, translated and edited by Donald C. Cutter of USC. It was printed by Lawton Kennedy.

*El Puerto de las Ballenas, Annals of the Sausalito Whaling Anchorage* by Boyd Huff. George Yamada printed this volume.

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## Available Club Publications

*The following publications are still available to members at the published price. If you wish copies for yourself, or as gifts, now is the time to order them. They will be wrapped and mailed from the Club in time for Christmas if you so desire.*

THE SILVERADO JOURNAL of Robert Louis Stevenson. Introduction by John E. Jordan. Illustrations include facsimiles of the title-page of the Journal, two of its text pages, and Stevenson's unique Silverado letter. Designed and printed by the Grabhorn Press. December 1954. \$18.50. (18 copies)

GEORGE CLYMER AND THE COLUMBIAN PRESS by Jacob Kainen. Preface and notes by James W. Elliott and Paul A. Bennett. 8 full-page illustrations of early presses. Printed by Taylor & Taylor. June 1950. \$5.00.

MOTHER OF FELIPE and other early stories by Mary Austin. Introduction by Franklin Walker. Marginal ornaments in color. Printed by Anderson & Ritchie. May 1950. \$5.75.

THE ESTIENNES. A biographical essay by Mark Pattison, illustrated with original leaves from 16th Century books printed by the three greatest of the distinguished Estienne family. Introduction by Robert Grabhorn. Printed by the Grabhorn Press. December 1949. \$15.00.

### KEEPSAKES

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PICTORIAL HUMOR OF THE GOLD RUSH. Keepsakes for 1953. Printed by the Grabhorn Press.

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